1:Campbell E-5 (1954-1955)1964
EH14 Sarakatsani EH14
Zagori

612 τὸ σόϊ) the Sarakatsani say. But a man's own feelings also prompt
476 him to give this help. Like the grace of God, which is expressed by the same word, such favours are generally without motive or conscious sense of calculation.

There are, however, other forms of assistance and co-operation between collaterals which make some demand on the material wealth of a kinsman and his family. This is no longer merely a matter of personal kinship solidarity, since it is the principle of parental obligation which guides a man in his conduct as trustee of the corporate resources of the family, human
[431] and material, under his control. He is not free to make gifts of
[675] money or animals to a kinsman in difficulties. Yet it is still possible for the families of these men to help one another in situations which involve corporately owned resources, providing that the assistance or co-operation is on a contractual basis of strict accountability. And this, of course, is only possible because between kinsmen there are normally sentiments of confidence and trust. In this way kinsmen sometimes make modest money loans, pasture each other's animals for a consideration, and frequently join in the co-management of their flocks.

The history of the misfortunes of Vasili Arvanitis illustrates this distinction. In the spring of 1955 his winter pastures were flooded by the irrigation of adjoining fields and, as often happens in these conditions, his animals contracted liver-fluke. From a flock of 105 sheep only 63 survived, an entirely inadequate number to support a growing family of five children. Vasili has a first cousin, Spiros Tangas, a more fortunate Sarakatsanos with 450 animals and a small property in the winter pastures near
● [487] Preveza. When Spiros learned of the difficulties of his cousin he at once left home and went by bus to Igoumenitsa, a day's
[662] journey away. There he visited an official of the Ministry of
[426] Agriculture, a friend who had baptized his youngest daughter,
[851] and asked him if he would try to arrange his cousin's application for a considerable loan from the Agricultural Bank. For such applications are sometimes delayed for many months because of the formalities of proof relating to the cause of the animals' death. The following day he made another bus journey of some hours to a small town where the Mayor was an animal dealer with whom he sometimes did business. The Mayor introduced him to a friend with a few acres of rough

2:Fermor/T-3,4 (no date) 1962
EH14 Sarakatsani EH14
Greece EH1

G 114 [103]

PERHAPS because it was my first Greek town after a few years of absence, I had taken a strong liking to Alexandroupolis. Large as it is, there is nothing overpoweringly polished about the citizens of this Thracian town; rather the reverse. Many of the limitations of a new provincial town pervade it; and the long evening hours of the officers and civil servants sitting in the *kaphenia* are spanned by familiar anecdotes and yawns and yet another coffee. The tedium of unchosen and unchanging company lurks there, and for some fastidious ones, the acute pain of listening to the same jokes and the same stories again and again.

G 517 275

S 484 291

All at once, however, the boredom of the dusty evening street was halted by the passing of a wild, solitary, and alien figure that no streets or houses should ever have confined; it was a presence as inappropriate in these tame surroundings as a wolf in a main street of Byzantium. A rough black pillbox was tilted askew on his matted and whiskered head. He wore a black double-breasted waistcoat of homespun goat's hair, tucked into a black sash, below which a hairy and broad-pleated black kilt jutted stiffly to his knees. Black tights of the same stifling stuff covered his long legs, and he was shod in those Greek mountain shoes which turn up at the tip and curl back in a broad canoelike prow and end in a wide black

[p. 73-B]

pompon covering the front of the foot. The thick soles were clouted, and the nails grated underfoot. Gazing straight ahead, he loped along the middle of the road, as though to keep as far as possible from the contaminating houses. A long shepherd's staff, whose crook was a tortuously carved wooden snake, was laid across his shoulders. His arms were looped over it in the cruciform position in which many mountaineers carry their crooks and their guns. He was a Sarakatsán. Heads turned as he passed, and the smack of cards and the clatter of backgammon counters died down for a few moments. I got up and dogged his steps at a discreet distance.

Sarakatsáns have always filled me with awe. I first saw these primeval Greek nomads years ago when I was walking across Bulgaria, on my way to Constantinople. A gathering of beehive-shaped huts were scattered over the wintry hills slanting to the Black Sea. Brushwood folds ran up the green slopes, and thousands of shaggy black goats and sheep grazed over the rainy landscape, their heavy bronze bells filling the air with a many-toned and harmonious jangle. Here and there among them, like dark monoliths under the wheeling crows, their herdsmen leaned on their lance-long crooks; their faces were almost lost in the deep hoods of high-shouldered goat's-hair capes that

had pocketed our tickets, we watched him work his perilous way along the duckboard of the corridorless train like a cat burglar. A large open cattle car was hitched to the rear of the train. A sound of raucous singing was carried along the line, and a blue flag whirled overhead on a long pole. The conductor, settling in our carriage for a chat on his return journey, confirmed what we had surmised. "Yes, it's a Sarakatsán bridegroom on his way to a wedding up at Sikarayia. They've been drinking for days." When we pulled up at the next wayside halt, the whole party leaped, shouting and singing, to the platform, the banner aswirl, and bore down on a small group waiting under an acacia tree. The white-clad groom and his cronies returned a few moments later, carrying the bride, who was attired in a stiff black and white costume of angular and Aztec strangeness, by her elbows. She sailed along the platform with the passivity of a sacred image being transported from shrine to shrine. As the shaft of the standard-bearer's banner careered past, I saw that it was topped by a pomegranate, and the same fertility symbol was affixed to the top and the two arms of a beribboned wooden cross. When they were all aboard, the groom's party fired their guns into the sky, and singing and intermittent firing accompanied the rest of the journey.

"*Paraxenoi anthropoi*," vouchsafed the conductor, after clicking his tongue censoriously a dozen times. "Odd people —" They did seem a contrast to the lofty Victorian stateliness of our carriage. He told us that the groom was the son of a great *tsellingas* — the head of a clan, as it were, of Sarakatsán shepherds — in fact, an *architsellingas*, called Kosta Zogas, who wintered at Sikarayia and pastured his sheep in the Rhodope Mountains in summer, not far from the flocks of the bride's father, another *architsellingas*, called Vrysas, who wintered near Souphlí, along the banks of the Hebrus. "You'd think," he went on, "when you see them in their rush hovels and their old capes, that they were poor. Not a bit of it! They've got pots of money. Literally pots. They fill up pitchers with gold sovereigns, and bury them — no one knows how many — whole fortunes in the ground."

SIKARAYIA turned out to be a village of beautifully thatched Sarakatsán huts. Giant beehives swelled and tapered in tiers of cropped reed which overlapped with the precision of the plating on armadilloes' backs, and all of them were topped by wooden crosses near holes in the thatch through which thin blue smoke curled. Black-clad Sara-

/92 cont./

232 which permits him to reach the brain and the cyst. With a hook
[413] (small elongated implement ending in a kind of hook) he removes
[237] the cyst, replaces the bone, covers the spot of entry with beeswax and applies a dressing. After several days the wound heels and the animal recovers.

233 The safety of the livestock

[685] The serious enemies of the flocks are wild beasts (chiefly wolves),
[577] on the one hand, and livestock thieves on the other. (A short time ago, the latter were very numerous, this type of theft being considered a virtue among herders. Against them Sarakatsani keep large dogs,
[231] very savage and very dangerous. These dogs do not hesitate to grapple with wolves, and it is for this reason that their masters put around their necks a collar studded with iron points.

Moreover, the shepherds always see to it that the flock /93/ does not disperse, for the strayed animals become the specific prey of wolves and thieves. This task is easier when there is a ram or a buck in the flock, since these animals act as the center of attraction for the livestock (ewes and she-goats). Moreover, the sound of their
[534] bells (they are huge, some weighing several kilograms) always gives the signal for reassembly of the flock by a conditioned reflex mechanism. This mechanism is so effective that even in the darkest nights the shepherds succeed in regrouping their animals by ringing these bells. /Fig. 74 appears here/

221 Seasonal migrations

233 The seasonal migrations involve the following arrangements:

484 At a designated hour, always before dawn, the women set to work;
361 entrusted with the preparations, they gather up the equipment and load
[462] it on the backs of the beasts of burden. The men, for their part, "take care of the livestock." When everything is ready, human beings, beasts of burden and flock form a column in the order laid down by tradition. The flocks surrounded by shepherds and dogs set out first.

/93 cont./

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Fig. 74

Then the second part of the column, made up of all the rest, starts moving. Of course, the entire column moves with the rhythm of the flocks; the latter cannot be deprived of grazing, nor rest during the hot hours during the migrations; they must also be milked.

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(439)

In this connection it must be noted, parenthetically, that in the course of the migration the Sarakatsani do not /94/ make real cheese; they simply let the milk curdle and subsequently sell it as is in the villages through which they pass. The complete preparation of cheese begins again as soon as they arrive at the site of their new settlement.

/94 cont./

221 The nocturnal stops are marked by the following activities:
233 --Unloading of the animals.
361 --Pitching of the tents.
484 --Preparation of the spot where the fire will be kindled to cook the dinner.
[417] --Setting up of the circular enclosures to protect the livestock, made sometimes with the bags containing the equipment, sometimes with thorny shrubs which form a very precarious hedge.
[462] All this work is done by the women.

The next day, at dawn, they recommence the march after having performed the same activities, but in reverse. And the journey continues in the rhythm of the flock until the arrival at the place chosen for the new settlement. It may take several days, sometimes more than a week.

233 Working with the livestock

[434] Strictly speaking, it is a question of the profit that is derived from the flocks, a profit realized from the milk, the shearing and the meat.

233 234 While ewes and she-goats are nursing their young, thay are not milked, or very exceptionally. Weaning, which goes on during the month of January marks the time when the milking commences.

[343] [415] At the hour of milking, ewes and she-goats are led into the "stroungha." Pushed by a shepherd who is inside, the animals leave one by one; they are then stopped by people sitting to the right and left of the exit, who milk them into special receptacles, "kardhari" (fig. 75).

233 234 221 The milking schedules vary according to the date: between the beginning of the month of January and the end of the month of June, the milking takes place twice a day, morning and evening. From the beginning of the month of July until the end of the month of August

/140 cont./

585 602 848 562 We have spoken previously of the public consent of the bride's kin, the significance of which, beyond what we have pointed out, consists of granting to the marriage of the young girl all the guarantees of legitimacy and convention. It seems to us that this act presupposes a rule according to which "the children born from a proper marriage are legitimate."

However, though on this point we can proceed only by hypothesis, since the Sarakatsani do not express themselves, they are fortunately a certain number of practices which leave no doubt as to their function and which we shall now enumerate:

[221] [492] [484] First, in the course of the seasonal migration, if there is a new bride in the group, it is she who, on horseback, rides at the head of the caravan.

[554] [474] When one realizes that only the chief of the Tséligato has the privilege of traveling mounted while everybody else goes on foot, we understand that this distinction granted the bride has a profound significance. This significance cannot be reduced to the desire of the Sarakatsani to honor the bride, as was formerly maintained. (20)

20. See Hadjimichali: Ibid., A. I, p.

Neither in the ritual of marriage nor in the family life as such does one find anything that can justify such an attitude with regard to the bride.

On the contrary, we have seen that everything tends to place the latter in an inferior position. Now, the practices found in a traditional society cannot be mutually contradictory. They always form coherent systems, and it is obvious that where one thinks one sees apparent contradictions, there is in fact a profound and sometimes hidden reason that guarantees the equilibrium and the cohesion of the system in question.

Our conclusions about the social functions of marriage (to insure collaborators and friends among lineages) explain this phenomenon.

596 /159 cont./
264 The meals, which the women take care of each in turn, are taken
[562] together, allowing for the inevitable separation by sex.

If the shepherds find themselves a relatively short distance from
[233] the camp, but nevertheless too far to be able to leave their flocks at mealtime, it is not unusual for a woman or a child to bring them their food.

596 The work then, which is performed jointly, follows the rule of
462 division of tasks according to sex, as shown in the following plan:

Work reserved exclusively for men: the wood craft, the preparation of skins, herding and transactions with the outside.

Work done by the women: the working of wool, the making of clothing building, gathering, the preparation of foods and of bread, lighting and fire.

This division of tasks is the general rule, a rule which naturally involves exceptions and subtle distinctions, chief of which are:

[825] The care and maintenance of goats is left to the women because goats
[233] "are possessed by the devil." Thus, the men must not touch them. They limit themselves with leading them to pasture. All the rest is incumbent on the women, inasmuch as the Sarakatsani believe that women are more competent than the men to enter into relations with unknown forces.

[23] The occasioned raising of pigs and poultry is likewise left to
[235] the women.

[36] We have seen that the leading and the protection of the flocks in
[22] the course of seasonal migrations is the business of the men. The
[184] women take care of the transportation of all belongings and the setting-up of the camp.

[236] The shearing of the sheep is work generally done by the men, although the help of the women is sometimes required. On the other hand, the shearing of goats is an exclusively female task.

[234] In milking, men and women cooperate without differentiation.

[313] The gathering of wood for making various objects is a task for men,
[322]

/326 cont./

representatives of the Church and the invocation of God and the saints in numerous magical rites (exorcisms) testifies to the existence of this threshold. The latter, already studied in connection with magic, must now be examined from the perspective or religion.

* * * *

The way in which the Sarakatsani celebrate Christmas, New Year's Day and Epiphany is known to us. Beliefs of non-Christian origin incorporated in the celebration of these festivals have been analyzed in the preceding chapter. However, Epiphany has additional rites of which we have not spoken and which are carried out in the following way:

On that day, throughout Greece, priests make the rounds of houses and professional places and, in memory of the baptism of the Lord, sprinkle human beings and dwellings with holy water. Among the Sarakatsani it is the women who carry out this practice. At daybreak they must set out for church (which they sometimes reach after walking three or four hours) to attend mass and return home with a supply of holy water. They then sprinkle the men, the huts, the sheepfolds, the enclosures, the livestock, the beasts of burden. Thus, it is the women who, in this particular function, takes the place of the priest who cannot make his way to the Sarakatsani konakia situated on the borders of his parish.

In addition to being the blessing of the Church, this practice is a means of purification against contamination by evil spirits (for the holy water absolutely removes the kalikantzari) and, by sprinkling an inducement to fertility and abundance.

In each family a supply of holy water is kept beside the icons, to be used, always by sprinkling, as a means of neutralizing evils and the influence of the evil eye.

The festival of Saint Lazarus occurs on the Saturday before Palm Sunday. Its celebration among the Sarakatsani consists of two phases. The first